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LB 305, 543

areas that we do and not in others, that we ought to focus. And maybe the loan forgiveness program is the best way to do that. But I, for one, would welcome some other discussion about where we ought to go. Maybe we ought not to be on LB 305, but, practically speaking, we are. And if we support Senator Chambers' amendment and take that money out, then obviously there's some money there to do something with. But what is that alternative? Where should we go? In some ways, I've put it in in our committee because I felt, to some degree, it was a placeholder, \$5.4 million is a placeholder for something that we ought to do for teachers. But are we going to do all of LB 305? My personal opinion is, it went through the General File, but it's not going to stay intact. Are we going to pick bits and pieces of it? Are we going to do the property tax relief? Are we going to have nothing? So I guess we're going to have this discussion here, one way or another, and it's going to end up on this bill, which obviously, I hope by six o'clock tonight, it will be gone through and we'll have our appropriations bill. But we still have a cloudy situation in my mind as to what areas we should focus on for teachers, and at what price. And is that...and my real thought is, can \$5.4 million be spent better somewhere else? And I'll have to say, up until this point, even though it's not perfect, like Senator Thompson said, it's what we have at this point. And I guess at this point I'm going to stay with it. But it doesn't mean I won't change my mind in ten minutes here if someone hits a focus that I haven't thought about. So I, for one, appreciate this discussion because I think we ought to do some things, but I don't know whether we have the stomach to all the things that we should do. And so, with that, I conclude right back where I started, Mr. President. Thank you.

PRESIDENT MAURSTAD: Senator Wehrbein. Senator Wickersham, on the motion to return.

SENATOR WICKERSHAM: Mr. President, members, I probably missed some of this debate, but I'm going to support Senator Chambers' motion to return. I don't think that the loan forgiveness program is the most effective thing that we can do to address the teacher compensation issues in the state of Nebraska. First of all, it only goes to what I would characterize as beginning